

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A system for interacting with automation devices, comprising:
a plurality of automation devices communicatively coupled *via* a network; and
an interface connected to the network including an interactive program and an execution engine for executing the program, wherein the interactive program and the execution engine are executed from within a browser and interact with automation device data.
2. The system of claim 1, further comprising a data storage medium for centrally storing data relating to the plurality of automation devices.
3. The system of claim 2, wherein the browser retrieves data utilizing the interactive program from the data storage medium.
4. The system of claim 2, wherein the browser writes data utilizing the interactive program to the data storage medium.
5. The system of claim 1, the interactive program comprising bindings that bind program variables to device data such that a change in device data is immediately reflected in the program variable bound thereto.
6. The system of claim 5, wherein the interactive program comprises functions that operate on program variables to produce information desired by a user.
7. The system of claim 6, wherein the interactive program comprises a presentation component that produces a multimedia presentation that is displayed on a display device.
8. The system of claim 7, wherein the multimedia presentation provides data with respect to one or more automation devices updates the data in real-time.

9. The system of claim 7 wherein the multimedia presentation provides a plurality mechanisms for transmitting data to one or more automation devices.
10. An human machine interface apparatus for operating in an industrial facility comprising:
 - a data store;
 - a plurality of automation devices communicatively coupled to the data store *via* a network, wherein the devices store data in the data store; and
 - a browser accessing data concerning one or more automation devices over the network and presenting such data to a user in a rich manner incorporating a multitude of multimedia effects.
11. The apparatus of claim 10, the multimedia effects being incorporated in the browser *via* an embedded interactive program.
12. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the interactive program is a flash program.
13. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the interactive program is executed by a plugin associated with the browser.
14. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the plugin is a flash player.
15. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein one of the multimedia effects is an interactive graph.
16. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein one of the effects is a depiction of an automation device with regions highlighted in real-time upon the occurrence of an error to indicate the device region associated with the error.

17. A method for interacting with automation devices comprising:
specifying an interactive program which binds program variables to automation device data and specifies a multimedia presentation format for interaction by a user;
embedding the interactive program into the browser; and
utilizing the browser and an associated execution engine to execute the interactive program.
18. The method of claim 17, wherein the device data is stored in a centralized data store accessible *via* a network.
19. The method of claim 17, wherein the interactive program is a flash program.
20. The method of claim 19, wherein the execution engine is a flash player.
21. An article of manufacturing comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable instructions stored thereon to perform the method of claim 17.
22. A method for interacting with automation device data comprising:
receiving a request for information from within a browser application;
retrieving the requested information from a data source utilizing an execution engine associated with the browser application; and
updating the browser with the requested information.
23. The method of claim 22, wherein the request for information is generated by positioning a cursor over an image.
24. The method of claim 22, wherein the data source is a web page.
25. The method of claim 22, wherein information is retrieved from a device controller.

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26. The method of claim 25, wherein the information is control data.
27. An article of manufacturing comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable instructions stored thereon to perform the method of claim 25.